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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0204  
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3561  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 9157  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 4146  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 9217  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 3898  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 2132  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0701  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000372

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DEPT FOR SA/INS, PRM

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER PREF NP

SUBJECT: NEPAL: INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE MOUNTING?

REF: KATHMANDU 271

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty, Reasons, 1.4 (b/d).

Japanese Increasingly Concerned

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¶1. (C) At a February 6 luncheon hosted by Japanese Ambassador Hiraoka, visiting MFA Southwest Asia Division Director Shinsuke Simiju told the Ambassador that he wanted to coordinate closely with the U.S. regarding policy toward Nepal. The Ambassadors and Simiju agreed that the U.S. and Japan shared concerns about the need for His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) to release political activists and for the political parties and the Palace to reconcile and address the Maoist threat. In response to Simiju's query about what type of press statement we planned to issue about the February 8 municipal elections, the Ambassador explained that our statement would likely declare that we did not find them meaningful nor a step that would lead Nepal back to democracy. Simiju concurred in that assessment. He said that Japan intended to keep the pressure on the government and would follow its January 19 statement condemning the arrests of politicos and issue another statement about the elections; Japan would not term the polls "free and fair."

Chinese Becoming Involved

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¶2. (C) Simiju was interested in China's role and views, especially given State Counselor Tang Jiaxuan's visit to Nepal in mid-February. The Ambassador noted that Foreign Minister Pandey had called him before the luncheon to convey that Chinese Ambassador Sun had complained to Sinophile Vice-Chairman Bista about the Nepalese government facilitating the travel of 40 Tibetan refugees from the Tibetan Reception Center to the Indian border. Pandey had added that the Chinese had subsequently requested meetings for Tang with Nepali Congress President G.P. Koirala and other senior political leaders. Pandey expressed concern that the Chinese desire to meet with political leaders was an obvious attempt to pressure the Nepali government. (Note: Informed sources report that Tang has also requested a meeting with UML leader M.K. Nepal, who remains under house arrest.) (Comment: On January 24, the Chinese Foreign

Ministry issued a statement suggesting dialogue between the political parties and the Palace. Ref A.)

Comment

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¶3. (C) With the election farce of February 8 imminent, HMGN is under pressure from two extremely important, and normally quiet, Asian partners to reach out to the political parties and narrow the divide. This pressure could well convince HMGN to release a number of politicos February 9-10 - after the election, but before Tang arrives on February 13. Moreover, Nepal might find it increasingly difficult to play the "China card" if Beijing continues its public criticism.

MORIARTY